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Staff and Student Perceptions of the Time Out/Seclusion Booth in an Alternative Day School for Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disturbance

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Staff and Student Perceptions

of the Time Out/Seclusion Booth in an

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Emotional and Behavioral Disturbance

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of the time out procedure at an alternative day school for students with emotional and behavioral disturbance. This study interviewed student and staff members at the facility using parallel questions. Information from the time out log was observed in order to verify student and staff responses. Results concluded that both students and staff members had similar perceptions of time out.

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To all of the '97 special education graduate students on "The Short Bus" - I'm so glad we grew closer this past year. Good luck to all of you and thanks for the laughs!

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Staff and Student Perceptions

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A behavior management system is an essential part of every classroom. When behaviors are managed effectively, students have a greater opportunity for learning. Behavior management is described as a system made up of prevention and intervention strategies designed to direct rather than control student behavior (Buck, 1992). A variety of behavior management strategies may be used by teachers. However, it is the responsibility of the teacher to choose strategies that will be most likely to increase positive and desirable behaviors.

When choosing strategies, teachers are influenced by the historical models of human behavior. Although there is much debate between these differing models, practitioners have successfully applied the principles of the behavioral model to a variety of human problems (Walker & Shea, 1988). A vast majority of national school districts surveyed in an early study relied heavily on a behavioral theory in their classrooms (Grosenick, George, & George, 1987). The behavioral model is a directive approach that manipulates environmental stimuli in order to change maladaptive behaviors. This philosophy suggests that all behavior is learned. Therefore, the teacher, who is the decisive

element in the classroom, should direct students in learning and developing more adaptive behaviors. Research indicates that individuals learn more effectively in positive environments. Gunter, Jack, Depaepe, Reed, and Harrison (1994) encouraged teachers to develop positive classroom environments that will increase positive interactions. In order to maintain a positive classroom environment, the classroom must be managed effectively. Experienced teachers of students with disabilities agree that pupil management is the cornerstone of effective educational programs and that skill in management is a prerequisite to effective teaching (Braaten, Simpson, Rosell, & Reilly, 1988). These management skills develop over time as discipline is an ongoing project. The word "discipline" comes from the same root as disciple. The implication is that to discipline is to guide and teach (Betz, 1994). Guidance and instruction, however, are not easily accomplished through prevention strategies.

Prevention Strategies

Students misbehave for a variety of reasons. The first and the most common reason for misbehaving is boredom (Buck, 1992). Students with little self-confidence often misbehave as a coping strategy. Other reasons students misbehave may include: frustration; power struggles; defensive postures; and/or activities that are too difficult. With these reasons in mind, educators need to establish management

plans that will prevent or decrease the chances of misbehavior.

An important tool for teachers in classrooms for students with emotional and behavioral disorders is reinforcement. Reinforcement may be defined as any consequence of a behavior that increases the likelihood of that behavioral response occurring again (Meese, 1994). Two types of reinforcement are positive reinforcement and negative reinforcement.

In Justen and Howerton's (1993) article, Sulzer Azaroff defines positive reinforcement as a procedure whereby the rate of a response maintains or increases as a function of the contingent presentation of a stimulus (ie., a positive reinforcer) following the response. Behaviors that result in positive consequences tend to be repeated. Reynolds, Salend, and Beahan, (1989) identified four types of positive reinforcers commonly used in school settings: edible, tangible, activity, and social. Winks, smiles, good grades, stickers, stamps, candy, and recess are often used as reinforcers in elementary schools.

Behavior may also be strengthened or maintained if it avoids or terminates an aversive stimulus. Negative reinforcement is one of the most difficult concepts in behavior modification (Walker & Shea, 1988). Negative reinforcement involves the REMOVAL of an aversive (ie. unpleasant) stimulus as a consequence of the behavior

(Meese, 1994). Most importantly, negative reinforcement does strengthen or increase behavior, but only in terms of "escape" or "avoidance conditioning" (Justen & Howerton, 1993). Therefore, the major emphasis in behavior management is on positive reinforcement. Instead of constantly chastising children for their poor behaviors teachers must determine ways to reward or reinforce children for their appropriate behaviors (Meese, 1996).

In addition to reinforcement, effective classroom management can be maintained by structuring the teacher's behavior to prevent student's misbehavior (Buck, 1992). Kounin's (1970) research on classroom discipline included two teachers who responded to control problems in much the same manner. However, the teachers differed in their ability to prevent discipline problems. The teachers who had a minimal amount of behavior problems in the classroom anticipated students' needs, organized their classrooms to minimize restlessness and boredom, and effectively coped with the multiple and often overlapping demands of teaching. If teachers are capricious, biased, or vindictive in their control, students may feel justified in rebelling or in ignoring this kind of authority and they may receive peer support for their rebellion (Bacon, 1990).

Teachers should also use close proximity when reprimanding a student. Direct eye contact should be made and the reprimand should be made privately, not publicly

(Lovitt, 1978). Non-verbal techniques such as these can be effective for communicating to students that their behavior is unacceptable.

Another technique is to keep rules simple and few. About three to four rules are sufficient. The rules should describe what the students CAN do as opposed to what they can not do (Buck, 1992). The classroom setting should also be appealing, with varying physical features, and a schedule to prevent boredom in both the teacher and the student. Lovitt (1978) introduced some general guidelines for preventing inappropriate behaviors:

1. Examine events that maintain students' behavior.
2. Keep data to determine whether an approach is working or not.
3. Consider a variety of techniques.
4. Concentrate on teaching new behaviors and deal with inappropriate behaviors only to the extent that they interfere with the individual or groups'learning (p. 1)

In addition to these guidelines, teachers may include their own unique way to maintain a positive classroom atmosphere. A five-step plan established for managing the behavior of all students in a heterogeneous classroom was compiled by Almeida (1995). This plan is called "The Five C's": Clarity, Consequences, Consistency, Caring, and Change (1995). Almeida (1995) explains that students must have a clear understanding of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behavior in the classroom. The consequence of an unacceptable behavior should be an immediate result. Almeida (1995) also suggests that the teacher be consistent

by acknowledging the child when he/she acts in an acceptable
manner, being genuine in the appreciation of a student's
good behavior, being fair about the consequences, and
presenting rewards/consequences immediately after the
behavior.

Almeida (1995) considers the last two parts of the plan
as being the most significant. Teachers must CARE about
students by making sure that the students learn the
material, while at the same time, supporting their needs as
children (1995). Finally, educators need to be prepared to
adapt or modify the curriculum. Teachers may want to change
activities at a more frequent rate and incorporate lots of
movement and other types of hands-on activities.

Research also indicates that some academic materials
presented to students may serve as aversive stimuli that
increase responses of avoidance or escape (Depaepe, Shores,
& Jack, 1996). Depaepe et al.'s (1996) study revealed that
difficult tasks were associated with a lower percentage of
time-on task and a higher percentage of time engaged in
disruptive behavior. A significantly lower percentage of
disruptive behaviors were observed given the easier task
conditions. Besides adapting the difficulty of the task,
teachers can also modify materials in accordance
with students' interests to reduce disruptive behavior
(Clarke, Dunlap, Foster-Johnson, Childs, Wilson, White, &
Vera, 1995). Despite how effective these strategies are,

prevention alone will not maintain appropriate behaviors. Even in the most positive environment, inappropriate behavior, noncompliance, and conflict will occur (Bacon, 1990).

Intervention Strategies

No one can guarantee appropriate behaviors in a classroom of students with emotional and behavioral disturbances. Therefore, when students behave inappropriately intervention must take place. Intervention strategies exist on a continuum from positive contingencies to more intrusive methods of punishment (Buck, 1992).

In the least restrictive alternative model, three levels of options are presented before aversive consequences can be implemented (Alberto & Troutman, 1990). The least restrictive alternative model for behavior reduction refers to the procedure a teacher uses when selecting a method of behavior reduction. Selection is based on the most effective procedure at the highest point on the hierarchy or continuum of behavior reduction. The hierarchy of procedural alternatives consists of four levels: differential reinforcement (Level I), extinction (Level II), the removal of desirable stimuli (Level III), and the presentation of aversive stimuli (Level IV).

The first level, discussed earlier as a prevention strategy, is the primary choice to consider in reducing maladaptive behavior. Reinforcement can be utilized to

increase desirable behaviors so that maladaptive behaviors do not occur. Level I includes the differential reinforcement procedures. Reinforcement may be presented to the students contingent on an appropriate response. This method is known as Differential Reinforcement of Appropriate Behaviors (DRA) or Differential Reinforcement of Incompatible Behaviors (DRI). Reinforcement may also be presented to the students when their target behaviors do not exceed a criterion level. This is referred to as Differential Reinforcement of Low Rates of Behavior. In order to decrease the total number of occurrences within a total time period, it is necessary only to increase the minimum period of time that must pass before another response will be reinforced (Alberto & Troutman, 1990). Reinforcement may also be presented contingent on the target behavior not being emitted for a specified period of time. This method is otherwise known as Differential Reinforcement of Other Behaviors (DRO). DRO has been used with a variety of behaviors such as self-injurious behavior, pinching, exhibitionism, and stereotypic behaviors (Alberto & Troutman, 1990).

In contrast to Level I, which focuses on providing reinforcement, extinction involves withdrawing the reinforcer. Jursten and Howerton (1993) define extinction as the procedure in which the reinforcers for a previously reinforced behavior are discontinued. In order for this

strategy to work, the teacher needs to be sure that he/she has identified what is reinforcing the behavior. In the classroom setting, the target behavior will be extinguished once the reinforcer has been withdrawn for a sufficient period of time (Walker & Shea, 1988). According to Ferster and Perrott (1968), this method typically produces an initial burst followed by a slow decline in the target behavior.

Moving further along the continuum of behavior reduction is the consequence of punishment. As defined by Yell (1990), punishment is an attempt to decrease the student's undesired behavior by removing or applying an aversive stimulus after the student emits an inappropriate response. The essential idea behind punishment is that the behavior of interest decreases when the consequence is applied (Meese, 1994). As in the case of reinforcement, there are two classes of punishment.

Punishment II is included in Level III of the hierarchy of procedural alternatives. Punishment II involves the removal of a positive consequence immediately after a response. An example of this operation is response-cost. This involves the removal of a certain amount of a positive reinforcer each time a student demonstrates a specified inappropriate behavior (Meese, 1994). Students may lose privileges, minutes of recess, or points in a response-cost system of punishment. In a token economy, inappropriate

behaviors would result in the removal of these points or tokens. After investigating token economies, however, Lovitt (1978) found that the maintenance of appropriate behaviors after the token system is removed was discouraging.

Finally, Level IV is introduced using Punishment I. Punishment I invloves the presentation of an aversive consequence immediately after a response. This may be done with a clear, firm reprimand that will redirect the student towards a more appropriate response. The reprimand acts only as a punisher if the consequences decreases the student;s undesired behavior. However, shouting or applying physical force is not recommended in classroom settings (Meese, 1996). An acceptable Punishment I operation is overcorrection. This is a reductive procedure that is a subcategory of contingent exertion that consists of restitutional training and/or positive-practice (Justen & Howerton, 1993).

The use of Level III and Level IV of the least restrictive alternative model for behavior reduction, often referred to as punishment, varies among teachers. Yell (1990) points out that some educators believe that punishment procedures are necessary components of behavior control programs while others maintain that punishment should be eliminated. In a survey of 216 teachers from New York and Pennsylvania, Salend, Esquivel, and Pine (1984)

found that teachers most frequently used relatively mild
aversive contingencies. The top two contingencies of
behavior management in this study were removing desirable
activities and utilizing teacher/student conferences (1984).
Dunn, Hack, and Loring (1980) found that teachers frequently
used reinforcement techniques of praise, nonverbal gestures,
and private conferences. Punishment, however, is often used
and abused among teachers of pupils with disabilities
(Braaten et al., 1988).

The use of punishment in schools to manage student
behaviors is a widely, debated issue. Discipline, as a
whole, is consistently a major concern for all educators
(Buck, 1992). In fact, regular and special educators have
received relatively little training in how to apply the
"special ways" of handling behavior problem students
(Almeida, 1995). One of these "special ways" is time-out:
One of the most misunderstood punishment strategies for
reducing inappropriate behaviors (Kutner, 1996).

Time Out

Polsgrove (1982) defines Time Out as an intervention
for reducing inappropriate behavior in which access to
reinforcers in a particular situation is temporarily
withdrawn contingent on the emission of that behavior.
Time out is a favored technique of many teachers and some
parents to discipline a child's transgression (Betz, 1994).
Although there are many issues regarding the ethics and

accountability of this behavior management procedure, time out continues to be a frequent choice among special educators for dealing with undesired student behavior (Nelson & Rutherford, 1983).

The three varieties of Time out include: non-seclusionary time out, exclusionary time out, and seclusionary/isolation time out. Non seclusionary time out is the least restrictive form of time out. This method prevents students from earning reinforcers without being removed from the classroom setting (Meese, 1996). Examples of this method include the time-out ribbon and red card/green card. When students are engaging in appropriate behaviors, their ribbon shows their name or the card remains on the green side, indicating their opportunity to earn reinforcers (1996). However, if students engage in misbehavior, the card is turned to the red side or the ribbon is turned over for a specified period of time out. This procedure is based on the premise that students prefer the reinforcing environment.

Solnick, Rincover, and Peterson (1977) reminded educators to monitor the relatively reinforcing properties of the time-in and time-out settings for each child. Often, highly demanding learning tasks constitute the time-in setting while escape is time out. Solnick et al.'s (1977) study revealed that when the time-in environment was "enriched", time out was effective as a punisher.

The second method of time out is known as exclusionary time out. In this procedure, the student remains in the environment, but is denied participation in the group activity for a fixed period of time (Twyman, 1994). The student is also denied the opportunity to earn reinforcement. The student does, however, remain in a position to observe the group. Gast and Nelson (1977) criticized this method of time out because the disruptive behavior could interfere with the activity of other students in the group and the pupil could immediately comply with exclusionary procedures, but continue to emit disruptive behaviors. Tyroler and Lahey (1980) suggested that exclusionary time out is most effective for younger pupils displaying minor behavior problems. Teachers may designate the hall area or a closed area of the room as the exclusionary time out area. Essentially, the location of time out is dictated by the flexibility of the teacher and by the physical facilities. When using this technique, it is mandatory that the student is unable to observe the classroom or any other possible reinforcing stimuli.

Finally, the most controversial time out is seclusionary time out, sometimes referred to as isolation time out. Isolation is the most frequently used and the most restrictive form of time out (Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995). Polsgrove (1982) defined seclusionary time out as the process where a child is placed in an isolation

room and removed from all reinforcement for a specified period of time. Seclusion may be used as a means of controlling children who have threatened the safety of others (Miller, 1986). All milder forms of time out should be proved ineffective in suppressing the inappropriate behavior before resorting to seclusionary time out (Gast & Nelson, 1977). When using seclusionary/isolation time out, Gast and Nelson (1977), presented these guidelines:

1. Students must continuously be monitored by staff.
2. Time Out should be designed to minimize the possibility of the pupil injuring himself.
3. The student should be confined to the room only until he is calm and otherwise indicates responsiveness to social interaction. If time extends to one hour, a senior member of the student's program must be called and must remain in continuous attendance until the end of the episode.
4. Records should be made of the time students entered the room and the time left. Notes about the circumstances surrounding the episode and the student's behavior before, during, and after each time out episode should also be included. (p. 463)

Past use of seclusionary time out has been shown to be therapeutic to the individual child and it provides protection for teachers from verbal and physical abuse from out-of-control children (Polsgrove, 1982). For the protection of the child, the isolation room should: a) be at least 6 by 6 feet in size; b) be properly ventilated; c) be properly lighted; d) be free of objects and fixtures with which a child could harm him/herself; e) provide the means by which an adult can continuously monitor, visually and aurally, the student's behavior; and, f) be unlocked

(ie., a latch on the door should be used only as needed and only with careful monitoring (Gast & Nelson, 1977, p 464).

Time out is a complex intervention that requires planning and ongoing evaluation. Specific guidelines as to the use of the behavior reduction procedures are not available (Yell, 1994). Therefore, time out should be used with caution because it is an intrusive and restrictive procedure. To compensate for the lack of guidelines, researchers and educators have compiled specific techniques to use when administering time out.

Foremost, teachers and students must have a clear understanding of the process. To insure the student's understanding, those behaviors which will result in time out should be explicitly stated before the time out contingency is implemented (Gast & Nelson, 1977). Nelson and Rutherford (1983) recommend that the teacher schedule training sessions at times other than when a time out intervention is required. This may increase the probability of student compliance. It may also be beneficial for each student to have a behavioral intervention plan developed by the IEP team (Calif. State Dept. of Educ., 1994). This behavioral intervention plan would include a detailed description of the behavioral intervention to be used and the circumstances for their use. At the moment when time out is utilized, Kendall, Nay, and Jeffers (1975) suggested using the following verbalized explanation: "Because you did _____,

you go to time out for _____ minutes." The inappropriate behavior should be stated along with the expected appropriate behavior (Bacon, 1990). Verbal instruction is preferred. Verbalizing the time out is less disruptive, requires less interaction, and places more responsibility for self-control on the student. However, this verbalization must be implemented immediately and consistently (Kutner, 1996).

Time out does not always have to be a verbal choice given by the teacher. The method can also be a self-initiated "cool-down". When students volunteer for a time out, they are perceiving time out as a safe place for the expression of cathartic anger (Smith, 1981). In Costenbader and Reading-Brown's (1995) study, 22% of the time outs experienced by older students were voluntary.

Often, a time out is preceded by a warning. Warnings or cues provide the student with an opportunity to terminate inappropriate behavior, thereby preventing the delivery of a more restrictive consequence. In Twyman's (1994) study, students with emotional and behavioral disturbance decreased their inappropriate behaviors when the treatment package included redirection, followed by a warning and then time out. Warnings also provide students with the opportunity to make decisions to regulate their behavior. The ultimate goal of time out is self-control (Gast & Nelson, 1977).

The specific behavioral requirements for release from time out should also be clarified for the student. Requirements may be dependent upon a set time or a specified extension of appropriate behavior. Behavior management theorists have recommended a duration of one minute in time out per year of the child's age (Zabel, 1986). Bacon (1990) suggested that time out periods should be fairly short. About 10-15 minutes are generally sufficient. Lengthy time outs may result in "emotional behaviors", in increased rates of inappropriate behaviors, and/or in an exposure to unnecessary aversive experiences (Gast & Nelson, 1977). While students are in time out, they are also being removed from academic learning time. Release from time out may also be unspecified. Students may be asked to "come out when you are ready" or "come out after a knock on the door" (Smith, 1981). After the student returns from time out, Bacon (1990) suggested that the teacher treat the student like any other student, emphasizing that admonitions, apologies, new reprimands, or warnings are not needed.

When these techniques are applied, educators must be sure to evaluate the interventions. Through the evaluation of past occurrences of time out, educators can identify which procedures are most effective.

Staff Perceptions/Uses of Time Out

Little is known about how teachers are using the time out procedures on the job (Zabel, 1986). Research has

indicated that by applying time out, the frequency or duration of a variety of behaviors such as physical aggression, verbal aggression, tantrums, and oppositional behaviors are decreased (Twyman, 1994). Generally, time out is widely used in the management of severely disruptive behaviors (Skiba & Raison, 1990).

In a survey of randomly selected teachers from public schools in Kansas and Nebraska, 70% claimed that they did use a system of time out in their classrooms (Zabel, 1986). Fewer than half of the directors of Special Education in an upper midwest state reported that their teachers used time out as a discipline procedure (James, 1994). Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) tallied 13,000 time outs in a single academic year in their study of 126 students with emotional disturbance. However, the use of a time out intervention seems to lessen as students get older (Zabel, 1986; Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995). Teachers may have more sophisticated, language-based interventions for use with older students.

Studies also reveal varying frequencies of time spent in a stimulus-deprived environment. Research by Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) found that on average, students were removed from the classroom about 44 minutes per week. Regarding this finding, Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) stated that time out clearly failed to teach the students or to persuade the students to use alternative, appropriate

behaviors. Another disturbing result involved a Minnesota
student with emotional and behavioral disturbance who was
excluded from class for 111 hours during five and a half
months of school (Strothers, 1996). This particular
situation involved staff with little training in working
among students with disabilities.

In contrast, another study averaged between six and
eight time outs a month for each student in a day treatment
program (Skiba & Raison, 1990) Approximately 11 hours, or
two days, of school instruction was lost. Time spent in
time out, however, was far less than time lost from absence,
suspension, and truancies. Although many professionals
suspect that time out deprives the student of the
opportunity to learn, evidence reveals a negative
association between time out usage and student achievement
(1990).

The length or duration of time out is a critical
determinant of the procedure's appropriateness. Yell (1990)
identifies that any prolonged or interrupted period of time
out with no educational provisions made are a violation of
the student's rights. In Morales v. Turman (1973), a
standard 50-minute maximum duration was established (CA
State Dept. of Ed., 1994). The Wyatt v. Stickney (1972)
decision established that emergency isolation of patients
who harm themselves or others must not extend beyond one
hour. Studies revealed that the average amount of time

spent in a single episode of time out was no more than

fifteen minutes. Findings showed a span from 9.61 minutes

to 12.3 minutes (Zabel, 1986; Crespi, 1988; Skiba & Raison,

1990).

Students frequented time out for various reasons. In

Zabel's (1986) study, teachers frequently gave time outs to

students for verbal aggression, physical aggression, and a

refusal to do work. Talking (37%), not following directions

(21%), and voluntary (12%) time outs were the top three

misbehaviors in Costenbader and Reading-Brown's (1995)

study. The behaviors of young students generally appear to

be getting worse due to the increase in gang violence,

vandalism, and a general disrespect for authority (Buck,

1992). Despite the behaviors which may lead to time out,

students must never be in time out without a legitimate

reason (Yell, 1994).

These legitimate reasons should always be documented.

However, a reported 47% of teachers did not keep a written

log of time outs in Zabel's 1986 study. Crisis report forms

provide the teacher with an understanding of behaviors that

precipitate violent and aggressive acts and define needed

interventions (Mylers & Simpson, 1994). Documentation

should include the name of the student, a description of the

episode, the time, the type of behavior, and the student

behavior during time out (Gast & Nelson, 1977).

Teachers are also using time out in many different settings. Time outs occur in public schools, psychiatric hospitals, correctional facilities, residential facilities, and day treatment programs. Studies indicate that self-contained rooms used time out more often than the resource classes (Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995). However, only 37% of the teachers of students with behavioral disturbance reported the availability of a separate room for time out (Zabel, 1986). Wherever the area of time out, evidence reveals that teachers are using the recommended procedures (Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995; Crespi, 1988).

When using time out, however, special educators are greatly tempted to use "best professional judgement" (Braaten et al., 1986). The absence of clear guidelines leaves teachers vulnerable when their management methods are challenged. Laws concerning the use of time out among students with disabilities are based solely on court decisions rather than legislative enactments (Yell, 1990). This is why there are questions concerning the legally sound use of these procedures.

Less than half of the school districts included in Zabel's (1986) study reported having written guidelines on the use of time out. Almost 41% of the districts reported having no written guidelines. A lack of guidelines is a very perilous situation considering that a single misapplication could result in the banning of this effective

technique (Polsgrove, 1982). Not only should guidelines be available, but also direction is needed in the area of evaluating progress and programs. When evaluating the quality and effectiveness of time out standards, student perceptions should be considered as well.

Student Perceptions of Time Out

Again and again, time out has been regarded as an effective procedure for reducing maladaptive behaviors among students with emotional and behavioral disturbances. Despite the effectiveness of time out treatment procedures, human service professions are still concerned about the method (Reimers, Wacker, Cooper, & DeRaad, 1992). Is the treatment acceptable? Treatment procedures used to reduce behaviors may be viable and acceptable to psychologists, but not to the students (1992). Kazdin (1980) defined "acceptability" as a judgement about treatment, including whether or not the treatment is appropriate, fair, reasonable, and consistent with conventional notions. Using this definition of acceptability, Kazdin, French, and Sherick (1981) assessed the acceptability of alternative treatments with the Treatment Evaluation Inventory (TEI) in a study of 32 children with emotional disturbances. Results indicated that time out was the least acceptable of all procedures and that time out had the highest negative rating on the TEI. The results also implied that seriously disturbed children can distinguish among alternative

techniques. It is also implied that the students preferred the least restrictive alternative of behavior reduction.

Minimal research has evaluated the child's view of time out. However, students with emotional disturbance tend to view time out as a punishment. In an earlier study, 40 children with emotional disturbance were requested to draw a picture of the seclusion room and describe how they perceived seclusion or isolation time out (Miller, 1986). The students' perceptions of time out greatly differed from the residential staff. Although the procedural guidelines mandated continued supervision of a secluded child, only 14 of the 43 pictures included people other than the child. Many of the pictures revealed an emphasis on locks and security. The drawings depicted such scenery as persons dressed in prison garb, three walls of only block and mortar, protective screens, and observation windows. Written descriptions of the time out room included "...it reminds me of dead people...I get scared...sometimes I imagine a head cut off," "it was like jail," "staff lock you up like an animal," and "seclusion is a small, lonely isolated room..." (Wrobel & Wood, 1992, p.91; Miller, 1986, p.66, p.70). Jail and prison are common depictions of the time out room.

In Wrobel and Wood's (1992) study, the residential treatment facility stood behind the philosophy that it was the staff's responsibility to provide experiences that

remediate previous dysfunctional development and help the child learn prosocial relationships and behaviors. Miller (1988) recognized that this task involved an intense level of staff involvement. However, seclusion, by definition, is a removal of staff attention at the time the child needs the staff's direct attention the most. Therefore, not receiving this attention, students may feel that time out was misrepresented to them by staff.

Students do identify that the purpose of time out is to "cool down" but they feel that they should be able to work through their feelings (Wrobel & Wood, 1992). Students identified talking it out and/or being sent home as alternatives to time out. Some general nonviolent strategies students use to deal with anger and aggression are "self-talk", "keeping it light", "making a detour", and "negotiating" (Bosworth & Hammer, 1995, p.4).

Overall, students with emotional disturbance tend to perceive time out as unacceptable. In Wrobel and Wood's (1982) study, one theme that consistently emerged in the student responses was a belief that time out was applied unfairly and inconsistently. In addition, students indicated that time out usually met the teacher's needs rather than the student's needs, and did not help them deal with their bad feelings. In fact, students often felt time out was a humiliating experience. In the context of what the students with emotional disturbance had said, Wrobel and

(1992) devised the following interpretation of a student's perception of time out:

> "If the real purpose for intervening is to help us calm
> down and feel better talk things out with us. If the
> real purpose for intervening is to punish our
> noncompliant, disruptive behavior, or if talking it out
> hasn't worked, then we will accept time out as an
> appropriate penalty. But teachers shouldn't tell us
> that going to time out is helping us calm down and feel
> better when we feel it makes us more frustrated and
> angry. To talk as if our feelings aren't real
> shows a lack of respect for us students, and leads to a
> loss of our respect for teachers and the program"
> (p. 96)

Statement of the Purpose

Grosenick et al. (1987) introduced the question of whether or not progress had been made concerning programs for students with emotional and behavioral disturbances in the past twenty years. Behavior reduction strategies are in need of intensive evaluation as part of that measurement of progress. It is through the evaluation of programs that educators can make changes and modifications for improvement.

Time out is a popular technique of managing behaviors frequently used in classrooms for students with emotional and behavioral disorders. Many investigators have called for research efforts to focus on the acceptability of this behavior reduction method (Reimers et al., 1992). Studies have revealed that teachers use time out for a variety of reasons, at various frequencies, and for varying durations. The students who are most affected by this method of time out have their own opinions, feelings, and ideas concerning

the implementation of this procedure.

Therefore, this study will evaluate time out as a behavior reduction procedure at a specific day treatment program. Student and teacher perceptions of the effectiveness and appropriateness of time out will be determined at this particular facility.

Method

Description of an Alternative Day School

The alternative day school is located in Central Virginia. The school is designed to meet the needs of students who are not able to participate in regular school programs due to psychiatric problems, severe emotional disturbances, conduct disorders, or other maladaptive behaviors. The school operates Monday through Friday and adheres to a 180 day school year. the goal of the facility is to prepare students for the eventual return to a less restrictive educational setting. The alternative day school does not discriminate in admission or access to race, color, or national origin in accordance with state and federal law.

The philosophy of the school program is based on a total environmental approach within which attention is given to individualized instruction, behavioral management, interpersonal skills, family involvement, and community social awarenss. Emphasis is placed on preparing the student for transition into a less restrictive environment.

Teachers develop the academic and behavioral goals and objectives within the context of an Individualized Education Plan. The school makes use of positive or negative reinforcers, punishment, and counseling as some of the techniques for meeting the objectives. In order to reward

behaviors and quantify the degrees of behavioral progress, the school has a points/levels system.

It is also necessary for the alternative day school to utilize the behavior management technique referred to as time out. The time out procedure at the facility takes place in the context of the classroom, time out area, or a time out booth. Time out is only used after the student does not respond to a less restrictive intervention. The procedure of time out will also be used in order to allow the student to separate from a situation and regain self-control.

Subjects

The participants of this study included students with emotional disturbance and the staff members at an alternative day school located in Central Virginia. Each student was between the ages of seven and eighteen. The students were referred to the day school by their public school system in accordance with Virginia's Comprehensive Community Services Act guidelines.

Permission of the Director of the school was first obtained. Parents of the students gave permission for research participation before the students were placed in the school. In addition, the staff was asked to participate. All participation in this research was

voluntary. Furthermore, all subjects remained anonymous. No names of subjects were disclosed.

Procedure

In this study, the researcher obtained permission to conduct research from the director of the alternative day school for students with emotional disturbance (See Appendix A). The researcher requested permission to have access to the student files and the time out log.

The purpose and the procedure was explained to the subjects. The staff members and students were then asked if they would like to participate in the study. The voluntary participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. All student names, staff names, and the name of the facility were considered strictly confidential.

The participants were interviewed in a private setting at the facility away from distractions. Before beginning the interview, time out was defined to include the periods of time when the student is sent to the time out area or room/booth. A table of questions was asked of each student (See Appendix B) and another parallel table of questions was asked of each staff member (See Appendix C).

Before the interview, the participants were informed that the interview session would be tape recorded. Following the interview, the tape was transcribed. All of the participants were provided with the opportunity to verify accuracy of the tape recording and the accuracy of

the transcription. The researcher assured the participants that the tape recording would be destroyed at the conclusion of the research. Again, to preserve anonymity, subjects were referred to numerically so the research information could not be linked to the participants.

Instrument

Staff and student perceptions of the time out/seclusion booth were acquired through an interview process. A table of questions was asked of each student and staff member (See Appendix B & See Appendix C). The questions were constructed by the researcher. The participants perceptions of time out were provoked by questioning his/her feelings, thoughts, and behaviors before, during, and after time out. The questions were open-ended and the researcher prompted for further understanding when necessary. In addition, the staff participants were asked demographic information such as previous teaching experiences, the number of years spent teaching, and their areas of licensure. Furthermore, data was obtained from student files including age, length of time at the school, number of previous alternative schools attended, and the number of office referrals. Finally, the time out log was examined to disclose the reasons why a student was sent to time out, how many times the student has

been sent to time out, and how long the student spent in time out.

Data Analysis

Means and percentages were computed for the demographic information compiled from the student files and the time out log. The participants' statements were examined and by the researcher. Any comments made by the participants which were not relevant to the questions asked by the researcher were placed into themes. These themes were then analyzed by two graduate students who were not associated with the research. Interrater reliability was computed to verify the themes.

Results

A total of twelve subjects were interviewed on January 28, 1997, and on February 4, 1997. Of the twelve participants, eight were students and four were staff members at the alternative day school. Interviews took place in the school library or inside the main office of the school. All interviews were completed in a private area of the school with minimal distractions.

Students

At the time of the interview, ten male students attended the alternative day school. Of the ten students, eight were interviewed. Subject nine refused to participate in the study. Subject ten had started the school program only a week before the date of the interview and was, therefore, excluded from the study. The student interviews averaged about fifteen minutes in length. The time out log was referred to for the number of time outs given to each student, the time spent in each time out, and the type of behaviors which resulted in the time out. The data from the time out log was available from October 24, 1996, to the time of the interview. In addition, ten time outs were not accounted for due to a lack of information (e.g. student name). (See Appendix D). Severe behaviors resulting in time out were also documented in detailed incident report forms contained in the student's confidential records. Details found on this form include a description of the

incident, who was involved, and the results of the intervention. An example of the form was not available to the researcher.

Subject One. Subject one was a fourteen-year-old, white male with an emotional disability and a learning disability. His academic standard testing indicated scores in the educable mentally retarded range and he was performing on the third grade level. Since starting at the school in September, he has had 15 time outs with a total weighted average of 30.7 minutes for each time out (actual range= 5 minutes - 100 minutes). His behaviors include horseplay, making noise, hitting, threatening others, not following directions, and being combative. He has been suspended from school twice for destruction of property. The subject had no record of time outs from January 2 to the time of the interview.

Subject Two. Subject two is a seven-year-old white male with a developmental disability and a language impairment. The subject lives with his foster parents and foster sister. He is currently working at the Pre-K/K level and speaks mainly in three word sentences. Since starting school in December, he has had 32 time outs with a total weighted average of 16.53 minutes for each time out (actual range= 5 minutes - 40 minutes). His behaviors include temper tantrums, hitting, cursing, refusing to do work, spitting, not following directions, and throwing objects.

Subject Three. Subject three is an eight-year-old white male with an emotional disability and Attention Deficit Disorder. The subject may also have psychotic symptoms with memory loss at times. He lives at home with his mother, who has a Bipolar Disorder, and visits his father on the weekends. The subject has had six prior hospitalizations due to out-of-control behavior. He is currently working at the second grade level. Since starting school in November, he has had 14 time outs with a total weighted average of 31.7 minutes for each time out (actual range= 5 minutes - 60 minutes). His behaviors include fighting, screaming, being disruptive, not respecting space, cursing, destroying property, and scratching and harming others.

Subject Four. Subject four was a fourteen-year-old black male with an emotional disability. He resides with his mother, and his father is incarcerated. He is currently receiving low "C" or low "B" averages in most of his classes. Since starting school in September he has had eight time outs with a total weighted average of 53.3 minutes for each time out (actual range = 10 minutes - 120 minutes). His behaviors include not following directions, threatening others, being out of the assigned area, being verbally abusive, and being combative.

Subject Five. Subject five was a thirteen-year-old black male with an emotional disability and Attention

Deficit Disorder. He has had numerous suspensions in
previous schools, and he has been hospitalized for a single
episode of Major Depressive Disorder with suicidal ideation.
The subject is currently performing at a borderline-to-low-
average ability level, and he needs individual academic
attention. Since starting school, he has had 3 time outs
with a total weighted average of 15 minutes for each time
out (actual range = 10 minutes to 32 minutes). His
behaviors include cursing, not following directions, being
rude, throwing objects, and fighting.

Subject Six. Subject six is a sixteen-year-old black
male with an emotional disability and a learning disability.
He is considered by his peers to be the 'leader of the
group'. He is currently working at a third grade level.
Since starting school in December, he has had a total of
nine time outs with a total weighted average of 20
minutes for each time out (actual range= 2 minutes - 240
minutes). His behaviors include aggression, threatening
others, being inappropriate to staff, not following
directions, and being very defensive. The subject has had a
history of truancy at previous schools including a juvenile
correctional center.

Subject Seven. Subject seven is a sixteen-year-old
white male with an emotional disability and a history of
depression. He lives at home with his father and
stepmother. The subject is currently working on the sixth

grade level and has not passed the Literacy Passport Test.
Since starting school in September, he has had 11 time outs
with a total weighted average of 21.8 minutes for each time
out (actual range= 4 minutes - 50 minutes). His behaviors
include being out of the assigned area, cursing, throwing
objects, threatening to hurt himself, and disrespect to
others. The subject has previously attended a residential
school for boys and a psychiatric institute.

    <u>Subject Eight</u>. Subject eight was a fifteen-year-old
white male with an emotional disability who lives at home
with his grandparents. He has an average ability at the
ninth grade level, and he has passed the Literacy Passport
Test. Since the beginning of school, the subject has had
two time outs for throwing a desk and cursing. However, the
amount of time spent in time out was not available. The
subject has previously attended two residential schools in
addition to public schools.

Student Responses

    To test the accuracy of responses, the student files
were used to verify the students' answers to Question two in
Part I of the interview. (i.e., What is your age?) All
students responded accurately. During the interview, some
questions were not answered by the student subjects (See
Table 1). The time out log (See Appendix D) and the student
files were used to verify the answers to questions five,
six, six a., and six b. All student comments were relevant

to the questions asked by the researcher. (See Appendix B & C). Responses from question one were tested for interrater reliability. The responses were randomly given to two graduate students who were not associated with the study. The graduates placed each comment into a category of negative descriptions or in a category of non-negative descriptions. A percentage was computed for reliability between the researcher and rater one, researcher and rater two, and between rater one and rater two by dividing the number of agreements over the number of agreements and disagreements multiplied by one hundred.

Question One. When students were asked to describe time out, all eight students answered. Three subjects responded with a negative description (e.g. "...a box where they lock you in.."like a jail cell") and five subjects responded with a non-negative description (e.g. "...something to help you cool down..."a big room"). (See Table 2). Interrater reliability was computed at 100% across all three raters.

Question Two. When students were asked to define the purpose of time out, six out of eight subjects responded to the question. Five subjects identified a purpose (e.g. "...To calm us down..."to keep us out of trouble") and one subject perceived time out to be a threatening procedure (e.g. "...to scare you...the little kids"). (See Table 3).

Question Three. When students were asked who benefits from time out, six out of the eight subjects responded to the question. Two subjects believed that nobody benefited from time out (e.g. "...Nobody...time out is Kindergarten stuff) and four subjects believed that staff and/or students benefited from time out (e.g. "...For us...For the little kids"). (See Table 4).

Question Four. When students were asked to reveal what they were told about the procedure of time out when they first came to the school, seven out of eight subjects responded to the question. Six subjects were informed about the procedure and understood the process (e.g. "...it was something to help you keep from getting into so much trouble...."it was gonna be a room..."). One student claimed that he was not informed of the time out procedure when he first came to the school (e.g. "...they didn't tell me nothin' about it"). (See Table 5).

Question Four a.. When students were asked if their response to question four was the way their teacher used time out, five out of eight students responded to the question. Two of the students believed the teacher used a different procedure (e.g. "...Nah!...They put you in the back of the class in a chair..."No, they keep you in from going outside"). Three students stated that teachers used

the same procedure described to them when they first came to
the school. (See Table 5).

Question Five. When students were asked for reasons
why they are sent to time out, all eight subjects responded
to the question. Cursing (n=4) was the most frequent
response. The second most common reason was not doing work
(n=3). Throwing objects (n=2) and hitting people (n=2) were
the third most common reasons for being sent to time out.
Being disrespectful was also mentioned by one student
as a reason to be sent to time out. (See Table 6).
Reasons as to why students were sent to time out were not
recorded in the time out log. However, a total of 68
reasons of why students were sent to time out were obtained
from the incident reports located in the student files. The
reports revealed that biting, fighting, and/or hitting (n=9)
was the most frequent reason to be sent to time out
accounting for a total of 13.24% of the reported reasons for
a time out. Throwing objects (n=8) was the second most
frequent reason for a time out making up 11.76% of the
total.   The third most common reason was for cursing (n=7)
accounting for a total of 10.29% of the reported reasons for
a time out. Threatening others (n=6) and being out of the
assigned area (n=6) followed cursing, each making up 8.82%
of the total reported reasons. Other reasons for giving a
time out, as recorded in the incident reports, included not
following directions (n=4, 5.88%), being disruptive

(n=4, 5.88%), destroying property (n=3, 4.41%), and refusing

to do work (n=3, 4.41%). (See Table 7).

Question Five a. When students were asked why their

peers were sent to time out, six out of eight subjects

responded to the question. Not doing work (n=3), cursing

(n=3), and fighting (n=3) were the most frequent responses

given by the students. Disruption (n=1), sleeping (n=1),

smoking (n=1), and horseplay (n=1) were also mentioned as

reasons for peers to be sent to time out. (See Table 6).

Question Six. When students were asked what their

feelings or behaviors were during the timeout, seven of the

eight students responded to the question. Six subjects

expressed aggressive feelings or behaviors during the time

out (e.g. "...Hit stuff...kick stuff...anger"). One student

expressed a non-aggressive behavior (e.g. "...sometimes I go

in there and go to sleep"). (See Table 8). Behaviors during

the time out were not indicated in the time out log.

However, behaviors and/or feelings were indicated on the

incident reports a total of 30 times. The reports revealed

that kicking and/or banging (n=7) was the most common

behavior of students when in time out, accounting for a

total of 23.3% of the reported behaviors. Sitting or laying

down (n=6, 20%) was the second most common behavior,

followed by cursing (n=4, 13.3%) while in time out. Other

behaviors indicated in the reports included stomping or

pacing (n=3, 10%), sleeping (n=2, 6.6%), being playful

(n=2, 6.6%), yelling (n=2, 6.6%), pulling hair (n=1, 3.3%), biting (n=1, 3.3%), crying (n=1, 3.3%), and completing work (n=1, 3.3%). (See Table 9).

Question Six a. When students were asked how they react when they are asked to go to time out, six of the eight students responded to the question. Three subjects claimed that they have refused or do refuse (e.g. "...I try to keep them from pulling me in there...mostly the time, I don't go"). Three subjects also claimed that they go willingly to time out (e.g. "...First I cuss 'em, then I go to time out...I tell them I won't go, but I go anyway"). When a student refuses, all subjects said that they would be "restrained" or be "physically" put in the time out room. (See Table 10). Student files revealed that at least three students have previously been combative or refused to go to time out.

Question Six b. When the students were asked if they volunteer to go to time out, six out of the eight students responded to the question. Three subjects said that they do volunteer or have volunteered, and three subjects said that they have not volunteered. When asked how they go about volunteering or how their peers would go about volunteering, five said that they would tell a staff member (e.g. "...I just go in there and tell the teacher I'm going to time out"). One student said that he did not know how to go about volunteering. (See Table 11). The time out log

indicated that at least three students have had voluntary
time outs.

Question Seven. When students were asked how they felt
after the time out period has ended, seven of the eight
students responded to the question. Five subjects claimed
that they would feel all right upon leaving the time out
room (e.g. "...I feel all right...happy"). One subject said
that it would depend on his mood (e.g. "...if I was angry
when I came to the time out room, I'm usually angry when I
come out.."). Another student often feels ready to stay in
the time out room (e.g. "...Ready to stay in there...to get
out of my work"). (See Table 13).

Question Seven a. When students were asked if they
feel in control after leaving time out, six out of the eight
students responded to the question. Five subjects said they
are in control and one subject claimed that he does not feel
in control after leaving time out. (See Table 13).

Question Seven b. When the students were asked if they
felt the time out was necessary, six out of the eight
students responded to the question. Five subjects felt that
it was necessary on certain conditions (e.g."...MHMMM,
'cause it depends on what you did...I think it was
necessary, but if I didn't do it, I wouldn't"). One subject
felt that time out was not necessary (e.g. "...Not really,

'cause I'm the same way I was when I went in there"). (See Table 13).

Question Eight. When students were asked if time out was a fair procedure, six out of the eight students responded to the question. Four subjects felt that it was fair or that it was fair on certain conditions (e.g. "To some people it is and to some people it ain't...[they shouldn't] force us to talk to a person that they don't want to [when processing]"). Two subjects felt that time out was not fair (e.g. "...No, 'cause they ain't got no right lockin' you in a box"). (See Table 14).

Question Nine. When students were asked for an alternative to handling a misbehaving student, five out of eight students responded to the question. All five subjects stated that the school should use suspension to reprimand misbehaving students (e.g. "...kick them out...send 'em to the office"). (See Table 15).

Staff

At the time of the interview, six staff members were employed at the alternative day school. One staff member acted as principal of the school. Two staff members were teachers at the facility and a counselor worked alongside each teacher. Counselors were classified as Counselor I or Counselor II according to their previous academic experience. The sixth staff member supervised the hall area, as well as the time out room. Among the six staff

members, four were available for interviews. The staff

interviews averaged about 35 minutes in length.

Staff One. Staff one was a white female acting as

Counselor II since the school opened in September. She is a

recent college graduate with experience working at an

institution for individuals with mental retardation and at a

group home for students with emotional disturbances. She is

not licensed to teach and her collegiate degree was in the

area of sociology and criminology. She sends students to

time out as often as twice a day and sometimes not at all in

a single day. Reasons for timing out a student, according

to staff one, included "kicking, hitting, threatening, or

out-of-control behavior."

Staff Two. Staff two was a white female acting as head

teacher for the younger level students since the school

opened in September. She is provisionally certified for

teaching students with emotional disturbance and/or mental

retardation and she has had many inservices, as well as

previous employment with the Job Corps. She stated that she

sends students to time out "probably daily" for being "very

disruptive, rude, and/or disrespectful."

Staff Three. Staff three was a black male acting as

Counselor I for three months at the facility. He is not

licensed to teach, but he has had previous experience

dealing with students who have behavior problems. He stated

that he sends students to time out primarily for profanity and/or cursing.

Staff Four. Staff four was a white male acting as a supervisor of hall duty and the time out area/room for five months at the facility. He is not licensed to teach, but he was previously employed at a school facility. He stated that he sends each student approximately one time a week for reasons ranging from disrespect to violent behaviors.

Staff Responses

All staff members responded to each question during the interview. Any comments made by the staff members which were not relevant to the questions asked were examined for recurring themes. Interrater reliability was then computed for each theme by randomly presenting the comments to two graduate students who were not associated with the study. The graduates placed each comment into one of the three designated themes. The number of agreements over the number of agreements and disagreements was multiplied by one hundred in order to calculate the reliability between the researcher and rater one, the researcher and rater two, and between rater one and rater two.

Question One. When the staff members were asked to describe time out, three subjects described three areas or stages of time out (e.g. "...We use the chair in the back of the room for cursing"..."We have timeout in the safe room...the perimeters outside of the time out booth..we then

put someone in the room who is kicking, hitting, biting...if we feel they're going to be violent, we'll shut the door.") One staff member mentioned the variation made for the younger students (e.g. "...with the younger ones, we time them out for probably a little bit more frequent things.") Another element of time out mentioned by one staff member was that giving a time out was a "judgement call" and that students are given a choice before going to time out. (See Table 16).

Question Two. When staff members were asked how they defined the purpose of time out, three subjects mentioned that the purpose was to encourage students to resume work. (e.g. " think about what they're doing and come back when they're ready to work...to come back to class and pick up where they've left off in their work"). Staff members also mentioned that during the time out, the student has been given the opportunity "to refocus their energy", "to get out energy", "deescalate", and see that "there are consequences for their actions". The goal of the whole program at the school was also mentioned by one staff member (e.g. "...Our goal here is to have students who are effective and productive..who can stay in the classroom and learn"). (See Table 17).

Question Three. When staff members were asked who benefits from time out, all subjects stated that everyone benefits from time out. (e.g. "...the other students who are

trying to work, work better...the student [in time out] can realize what he's done...The staff benefits [because] we can control the time out room"). (See Table 18).

Question Four. When staff members were asked to describe the procedure of time out, all subjects suggested a sequence of stages or a routine the student must go through before and during the time out. (e.g. "...we try to go from least restrictive to the more restrictive..we always give choices...we go from..outside the time out room, to the time out room door open if...if they're not calm, they get it closed"). Giving the student a choice between going to the time out room or behaving correctly was mentioned by two subjects. (See Table 19).

Question Four a. When staff members were asked if they modify the procedure of time out, three subjects suggested a modification for the different age levels or personalities. (e.g. "...I tend to do more time outs in the classroom with the younger guys before I send them out..we're a little bit more sterner on the younger ones"). One staff member uses the same procedure for all students regardless of age (e.g. "...all students. Because I think it's fair"). (See Table 20).

Question Five. When staff members were asked for the types of behaviors that result in time out, cursing (n=2), throwing objects (n=2), and fighting (n=2) were most frequently mentioned. Being out of the assigned area (n=1),

showing disrespect (n=1), and disturbing peers (n=1) were also mentioned as reasons for being sent to time out. (See Table 21). The incident reports from the student files also revealed fighting, throwing objects, and cursing as the top three reasons for a time out. Additional behaviors included in the reports, but not mentioned by the staff members, included threatening others, not following directions, destroying property, and refusing to do work. (See Table 7).

Question Six. When staff members were asked what the student behaviors or feelings were during the time out, kicking (n=3) and sleeping (n=3) were mentioned most frequently by staff. Screaming (n=2) and cursing (n=2) were the second most frequent behaviors of students during time out. Other behaviors or feelings mentioned included stripping (n=1), fear (n=1), crying (n=1), hitting the wall (n=1), and being playful and/or silly (n=1). (See Table 22). The incident reports validated that kicking was the most common behavior of students when in time out. While sleeping accounted for only two of the thirty recorded behaviors, the files revealed sitting and other passive behaviors among 20% of the total documented behaviors.

However, sitting or other calm behaviors were not mentioned by any staff members. (See Table 9).

Question Six a. When staff members were asked what the procedure was when the students do not willingly go to time

out, three staff members stated that a choice was presented
to the student (e.g. " if you can't come out on your own, we
will escort you to process...I'm giving you five minutes to
calm down and if not,...we give them two options"). All
subjects mentioned that if students do not go willingly to
time out, the student will be "escort(ed)" or
"restrain(ed)". One staff member mentioned the Mandt
restraining technique (e.g. "It's just special holds that we
use"). In addition, one staff member stated that
restraining a student is "not done terribly frequently".
(See Table 23).

Question Six b. When staff members were asked if they
encourage students to go to time out voluntarily, all
subjects said that they do encourage students to volunteer
for a time out (e.g. "...We tell them that if they need a
time out or need some time, to let us know"). Another
common element mentioned by two staff members was their
method in distinguishing a genuine need for a time out (e.g.
"...Most of the times we can figure out if it's attention
seeking by who else is in there that they want to see...You
just have to know the student"). One member mentioned that
time spent in time out, if voluntary, is a short period of
time "so as they don't miss much class". (See Table 24).

Question Seven. When staff members were asked how they
believed students felt after the time out, the consensus was
that the student must be willing to talk (n=4), calm (n=2),

not as angry (n=2), following directions (n=1), and coherent (n=1). A common element mentioned by all staff members was the processing procedure done with each student before returning to the classroom (e.g. "...We have forms, the reasons for the time out, the students' actions before the time out, the students' actions while in time out...we normally process with them and talk about what went on"). One staff member suggested observing the student closely (e.g. "...how tight are they holding their fists, their jaw...they don't mind talking"). (See Table 25).

Question Seven a. When staff members were asked if the students were in control when they left time out, all subjects said "yes" in response. One subject suggested that giving a set time to a student in time out may "back fire" as it may not be enough time for the student to regain control (e.g. "What I do is tell them, you'll have as much time as you need. If it's an hour to two hours or whatever"). (See Table 26).

Question Seven b. When staff members were asked if the time out was necessary, all subjects said that time out is necessary. One subject mentioned that time out "helped the students". Another subject added that the staff is careful about sending a student to time out "unnecessarily". (See Table 27).

Question Eight. When staff members were asked if the time out procedure was fair, all subjects stated that it was

a fair procedure. Two subjects mentioned that the students, at the time, may not think it's fair. Another subject suggested that it is fair when dealing with a population of students with emotional disturbance (e.g "...[students] who need space or time to themselves to deescalate, to think about what they're doing, how they are hurting other students"). (See Table 28).

Question Nine. When staff members were asked for an alternative to handling misbehaving students, the subjects had limited suggestions. The suggestions mentioned included giving homework (n=1), sending the student to the principal's office (n=1), talking to a therapist (n=1), and processing outside of the room (n=1). Two of the staff members claimed that there was not a better procedure for handling these types of students (e.g. "..[I] don't think it could really be done...teachers would have total chaos...I'm not sure if anything less than being timed out by themselves would be effective"). (See Table 29).

Recurring Themes for Staff

A total of thirteen comments made by the staff were not relevant to the questions asked during the interview. These thirteen comments were examined for common themes. Three themes were developed by the researcher. Interrater reliability was computed for each theme. Overall interrater reliability was 78.5% between the researcher and rater one,

76.57% between the researcher and rater two, and 75.43% between rater one and rater two.

Theme One: A Positive and caring environment has been established. Theme one was defined as staff comments which mentioned respect and concern for one another and respect and concern for the students. This theme had the most support, accounting for six (46.2%) of the total statements. The comments were made by three staff members. A common element recognized among the comments was that the staff cared about their job and about their students (e.g. "I want to know how they're feeling...we are going to keep the environment safe for you guys"). Staff comments also suggested that a positive environment has been established (e.g. "...you're always assessing what you did and why you did it...if this school was closed today, they'd be upset...we work together well...we process on the way home...we process everything"). (See Table 30). Across all three raters, interrater reliability for theme one was averaged to be 80.4 percent. (Range= 71.3% - 85.5%). (See Table 31).

Theme Two: Inconsistencies and/or contradiction made among staff members. Theme two was defined as staff comments which mentioned varying methods of time out used among the staff members. Five comments were included in theme two, accounting for 38.46% of the total comments. The comments were made by three of the staff members. One

inconsistency was the acceptance/non-acceptance of sleeping
when in the time out room. One staff member mentioned that
a child was sent to time out for sleeping in class while
another staff member suggested that when in the time out
room "...time would start when they wake up" suggesting that
sleeping is permissible in time out. Another contradiction
was made by staff member three (e.g. "...We try to be
consistent...My methods are different...all of us are a
team"). If staff is different in their procedures, then
they are not being consistent. A third contradiction is the
acceptance/non-acceptance of completing work in time out.
One staff member does not prefer students to complete work
in the time out booth. However, another staff member stated
that "...we'll bring the work in here [in time out] to start
it then he'll go back to class". (See Table 32). Theme two
had an interrater reliability average of 75.47 percent.
(Range= 71.42% - 80%). (See Table 31).

Theme Three: Changes Have Been Made in the Time Out
Procedure Since the Program Began. Theme three was defined
as staff comments which mentioned changes that took place in
the program since it began in September. Four comments were
included in theme three accounting for 30.78% of the total
number of comments. The comments were made by three staff
members at the school. Changes included not giving a set
time for the student to spend in time out, a change in the
severity of student behaviors (e.g. "...when we first

started we were doing time out more and more because we had some students who were not suited for our program"), a change towards being more consistent, and a change to not putting hands on a student as frequently (e.g. "we haven't put hands on a student in say a month and a half"). (See Table 33). Interrater reliability was 75% across all three raters for theme three. (See Table 31).

Discussion

The alternative day school for students with emotional disturbance utilized intervention strategies which exist on a continuum from positive contingencies to more intrusive methods of punishment. Students were on a point and levels system which determined their access to reinforcing activities and/or privileges. The loss of points was contingent on the maladaptive behaviors of the student. Severe behavior problems were managed by way of a punishment procedure referred to as time out.

Consistent with findings from Almeida's (1995) research, most staff members had relatively little training in working with students with emotional and behavioral disturbances and in the application of the time out procedure. To compensate, changes and evaluations of the time out procedure at the facility had been made since the start of the school year in September.

Staff members used exclusionary time out in the back of the classroom primarily for the younger students. Tyroler and Laher (1980) agree that exclusionary time out is most effective for younger pupils. As defined by the staff members, seclusionary time out was implemented after all milder forms of time out were ineffective in suppressing the maladaptive behaviors.

The physical aspects of the time out room followed all guidelines presented by Gast and Nelson (1977). Students

were supervised while in time out, and after a processing
form was completed and the student was calm, he/she could
then return to the classroom.

Consistent with Costenbader and Reading-Brown's (1995)
study, older students were more prone to self initiate a
"cool down" in time out. Three out of the eight student
participants had previously volunteered for a time out.
This data may suggest that the students are mature monitors
of their own behavior with the ability to recognize the need
for individual space. The data may also be interpreted to
mean that time out is somehow reinforcing for the students.
The reinforcing properties of time out were revealed by
students, staff, and the time out log. All three sources
indicated sleeping to be a permissible behavior while in
time out. As defined by Polsgrove (1982), time out is an
"intervention for reducing inappropriate behaviors in which
access to reinforcers in a particular situation are
withdrawn." If sleeping is a permitted reinforcing behavior
for students in time out, the inappropriate behaviors which
result in time out may increase in frequency.

Research studies done by Costenbader and Reading-Brown
(1995) and Strothers (1996) revealed students spending
unreasonable lengths of time in time out. Among all of the
recordings of time out at this facility, students spent as
few as two minutes in time out and as long as 120 minutes
for a single episode of time out. Yell (1990) asserted that

a prolonged period of time out, such as 120 minutes, can be considered to be a violation of the student's rights. In addition, this length of time may violate the student's right to a beneficial educational procedure (Nelson & Rutherford, 1983).

Reasons for a time out were consistent with Zabel's (1986) study as teachers frequently gave time outs for verbal and physical aggression. Students at the facility mentioned similar behaviors which would result in time out, suggesting that students have an understanding of how to remain in the classroom and how to avoid the consequence of time out. Although there was no indication that the facility was evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention, one subject's response could be interpreted to mean that time out was an effective procedure. Responses from student one suggested that his behavioral changes had been self controlled. During the interview, subject one indicated that he has not had a time out "in a while" because he was trying to "get out" of the alternative placement. The student's own monitoring of his behaviors can be interpreted to mean that time out has been effective in suppressing a behavioral change in the student.

Minimal consistencies were found with previous studies regarding student perceptions of time out. Research indicates that jail and prison are common depictions of the time out room (Wrobel & Wood, 1992; Miller, 1986). One

student in the study revealed such a depiction. The descriptions of time out taken from five student subjects included non-negative and non-threatening responses.

In Miller's (1986) study, student perceptions of time out greatly differed from the staff perceptions. However, the study at hand revealed similar responses among students and staff in regards to the time out procedure, its benefits, and its purpose. Time out was perceived by over half of the student subjects as a non-threatening, acceptable, fair, and necessary procedure. A reason for this inconsistency may be due to the contrasting methods of the two studies. Miller's study was conducted among 40 children, aged five to thirteen years of age, at a residential facility. In contrast to the present study, Miller's study included a larger sample size, a younger population of students, and students who are assumed to have been placed in a residential setting due to severe behavior problems. Students in residential settings also have more opportunities for time outs.

Wrobel and Wood (1992) indicated that students preferred to talk through their feelings as an alternative to time out. At the facility where this study took place, a combination of the time out procedure with a counseling/processing component was implemented. Staff and students described a processing form (Appendix E) completed after each time out. This form addresses student feelings

and explores alternative ways for the student to handle similar situations.

After the time out, students revealed that they felt in control and prepared to resume work. Subjects in Wrobel and Woods (1982) study, however, felt that the time out did not help them deal with their bad feelings and that the time out made them feel more frustrated and angry. This inconsistency may be attributed to the fact that interviews in Wrobel and Woods' study were conducted in a group situation. In this method of interviewing, there might be a tendency for the students to respond in a similar manner, so as not to be the "outsider". However, the subjects included in the study at hand may not have been sincere or honest in their responses during their one-to-one interviews. Nevertheless, some responses were validated using the time out log and the student files.

The lack of information on the time out log is inconsistent with Gast and Nelson's (1977) guidelines. When recorded, the time out log included the name of the student, the date, the time in time out and the time out of time out (Appendix D). Gast and Nelson (1977) suggest that in addition to this information, notes should be made about the circumstances surrounding the episode, such as the student's behavior before, during, and after each episode. The time out log at the facility contained scattered notes of the

student behaviors, and the time the student left the booth was often not documented. The researcher utilized reports found in the student files which described student incidents involving the procedure of time out. With this information, data was collected on the reasons students are sent to time out and the behaviors they demonstrate while in time out. Thorough documentation is essential when using such an intrusive and restrictive procedure.

Several limitations were apparent in this study. The information collected during interviews was specific to only one setting. Results can not be generalized to other facilities which utilize time out for managing behaviors. In addition, the study included a small sample size. Two of the ten students were dismissed from the study, and some subjects who participated did not respond to all of the questions asked by the researcher (See Table 1). Another limitation of the study is the low number of comments supporting the recurring themes generated among staff responses. Having a low number of comments resulted in low percentages of interrater reliability. Finally, the results of this study may not be accurate. The number of time outs and the time spent in time out may be a minimal estimate of the actual number of behavior incidents resulting in time out. The time out log was often incomplete and vague.

The study at hand only collected the perceptions of staff and students. Actual observations over time may have yielded information regarding whether or not the perceptions held were accurate. In addition, further research should be conducted on evaluating the effectiveness of time out at this facility. Perhaps a longitudinal study should be conducted in order to track the incidents of time out for a student who is frequently sent to time out. Future research could also examine the frequency of time outs on specific days of the week. Teachers at this facility mentioned weekly patterns of student behavior. This research may be beneficial for teachers who would be able to prepare for the day of the week which tends to have greater frequencies of time out. Research may also indicate what elements may be contributing to the weekly patterns in student behaviors. A replication of this study or a modified replication could also be conducted at similar facilities for future research. Regardless of the method, further investigations of the time out controversy are needed.

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Appendix A

Letter of Permission

January x, 1997

Dear School Director,

My name is Kelley Regan and I am a graduate student at Longwood College in Farmville, Virginia. I am working on my Master of Science in Special Education. Currently, I am completing a thesis which will describe student and teacher perceptions of time out in an alternative day school for students with emotional and behavioral disturbance.

Therefore, I am requesting permission to have access to information found in the student files and time out log at your facility. In addition, I am seeking permission to conduct an interview of each student and teacher who agrees to participate. The interview will last approximately one half hour to forty-five minutes. I will be tape recording the interview. This tape will then be destroyed at the conclusion of the research.

I assure you and all of the voluntary research participants confidentiality. All student names, teacher names, and the name of the facility will be strictly confidential. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at xxx-xxx-xxx.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Kelley S. Regan
Master degree candidate

I, _____, _____ give permission/ _____ do not give permission for Kelley S. Regan to conduct research at this facility.

Appendix B

Student Questionairre

Student #____

Part I.

1. Sex ____

2. What is your age?

3. How long have you been at this school?

4. Have you ever been sent to time out at this school? If so, how many times?

Part II.

1. Describe time out.

2. What is the purpose of time out?

3. Who benefits from time out?

4. What were you told about the procedure of time out when you first came to this facility?

    a. Is this the same procedure of time out your teacher uses in the classroom?

5. Why are you sent to time out?

    a. Why are your peers sent to time out?

6. What behaviors/feelings do you exhibit during the time out?

    a. How do you react when you are asked to go to time out? Do you refuse? If so, what is the outcome?

    b. Do you volunteer to go to time out? If so, how do you go about volunteering?

7. How do you feel after the time out period has ended?

    a.   Do you feel in control?

    b.   Do you think it was necessary?

8. Is time out a fair procedure? Why or why not?

9. If time out was not used at your school, how should staff handle a misbehaving student?

Appendix C

Staff Questionnaire

Staff #___

Part I.

1. Sex ___

2. How long have you been at this school?

   a. Have you ever worked at other alternative, public, or private schools?

3. Are you licensed to teach?

   a. Have you had any classes in behavior management?

4. Have you ever sent a student to time out at this school? If so, how often and for what reasons?

Part II.

1. Describe time out.

2. What is the purpose of time out?

3. Who benefits from time out?

4. What is the procedure of time out at this facility?

   a. Do you use this procedure for all students in your classroom or do you modify the procedure to fit the particular student? How so?

5. What types of behaviors result in time out?

6. What behaviors/feelings do you think the students exhibit during the time out? (What makes you say that?)

   a. What is the procedure if students do not go willingly to time out?

   b. Do you encourage students to voluntarily go to time out?

7. How do you think students feel after the time out?

    a. Are the students in control when they return?

    b. Do you think the procedure was necessary?

8. Is time out a fair procedure? Why or why not?

9. If time out was not used at this school, how should staff handle a misbehaving student?

Appendix D

Time-Out Room Frequency Log

TIME-OUT ROOM FREQUENCY LOG

Date	Student's Name	Time In / Time Out	

Appendix E

Time-Out Processing Form

Time-Out Room Processing Form

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

Staff Member's Name: _____

Time In: _____ Time Out: _____

1. Is the student aware of the reason he/she went to the time-out room? Yes / No

2. Is the student aware of the events preceding the inappropriate behavior? Yes / No

3. Does the student acknowledge his/her behavior?
    Yes / No / Other: _____

4. Is the student aware of what he/she was trying to accomplish? Yes / No
    Comment: _____

5. How was the student feeling when he/she acted inappropriately? Angry / Hurt / Sad / Frustrated / Other: _____

6. Does the student accept responsibility for his/her behavior? Yes / No
    Comment: _____

7. Is the student able to name alternative ways he/she could have solved the problem? Yes / No

    Example: 1. _____

              2. _____

              3. _____

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

TIME-OUT PROCESSING FORM

1. What are you feeling? (Please circle)

    Angry   Sad   Frustrated   Confused
    Happy   Excited   Energetic   Other: _____

2. What were you doing which caused staff to ask you to go to Time-Out?

    _____

    _____

3. What were you trying to accomplish?

    _____

    _____

4. List two things you could have done differently that would have accomplished
    (appropriately) that which you wrote in Item #3.

    _____

    _____

5. How could staff help you now?

    _____

    _____

Tables 1-33

Table 1

Student Subjects Who Responded to the Questions

Question	Subject									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
#1	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
#2	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
#3	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
#4	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
#4a.	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
#5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
#5a.	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
#6	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
#6a.	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
#6b.	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
#7	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
#7a.	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
#7b.	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
#8	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
#9	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N

Note. Y = Response; N = No response

Table 2

Student Subjects Describe Time Out

Subject	Response
1	"You just go in . And if your mad, you kick around. If not, you sit until they say you can come out."
2	"In there" (points down the hall). "It's a big room."
3	"It's ugly. I hope I go 'cause it's stupid."
4	"It's just something to help you cool down. And like when you go up there they ask you some questions and they give you time to calm down and you get closed in the room. It's just a little room, like a dark room."
5	"It's like a little room. Like they close the door and you stay in to calm yourself down."
6	"There's a blue room you got to go in and like they give you five or ten minutes. And then you got to talk to them before you even get to come out."
7	"It's a room 'bout eight by eight. Staff issues a time out. The time out room is like a jail cell."
8	"A box. Where they lock you in. You don't want to go there. The teacher tries to play get backs with you and put you in there anyway."

Table 3

Students Answering Question Two Describe The Purpose of Time
Out

Subject   Response

---

1   "I don't know. I guess to cool you down I imagine."

2   No Response.

3   No Response.

4   "To help you calm down."

5   "To calm us down. Instead of suspendin' us, not
     everytime we do stuff."

6   "To try to get people to do their work and to have
     'em like that's where they be if they get in trouble
     or something 'stead of having them suspended or
     something. Have it to put 'em in time out 'stead of
     sending them home and suspending them."

7   "To keep us out of trouble."

8   "To scare you. They try to scare the little kids.
     (Does it scare you?) Nope.

Note. Text in parenthesis was spoken by the researcher.

Table 4

Students Answering Question Three State who Benefits from
Time Out

Subject	Response

---

1   "The students. If they're making noise and stuff in
the classroom. So, it's good for the students who are
trying to work. It really doesn't bother the staff
because staff gonna watch you in the time out room
anyway."

2   No Response.

3   No Response.

4   "For us. 'Cause it's helped us."

5   "Good for it's good for everybody. Like 'stead of the
teachers, it's good for them so they can like make us
go to time out to calm ourselves down instead of them
taking us to the office and suspendin' us. Things
like that. To clam ourselves down."

6   "It do the teacher some good. (Students?) No. 'Cause
they come back and do the same thing."

7   "I think nobody benefits from time out. Time Out is
kindergarten stuff."

8   "Mainly for the little kids. Scares 'em. Makes them
not want to act up."

Table 5

Students Describe Procedure of Time Out and If It Was the
Same as the Teacher Uses It

Subject	Response

---

1   "Say like I got in trouble or anything, It room and they'd try to get you back on schedule doing your work." (Same?) No Response.

2   "I take (a chip) away (when I go to time out)." (Same?) No Response.

3   No Response.

4   "That you would just go there when you act up and stuff. And it was something to help you keep from getting into so much trouble." (Same?) "...Nah, they put you in the back of the class in a chair."

5   "They said if you act up, they put you in time out. (Same?) "MHMMMM."

6   "That it was a room that you was gonna go into and if anybody cuss at their teacher they had to go to the time out for the time they give you." (Same?) "Yeah."

7   "When staff issues a time out, we have to go. When we don't, they physically put us in time out." (Same?) "Yeah."

8   "They didn't tell me nothin'. (Same?) They keep you in from going outside, when you supposed to."

Table 6

Student Subjects Answer Question Five.

Subject	Reasons Sent to Time Out	Reasons Peers Are Sent
1	"Being disrespectful to teachers and others. I'll cuss 'em out, making noises and stuff in class."	"Some tell the teacher they ain't going to do their work."
2	"I hit my teacher."	No Response.
3	"Act up. Bad. Cussin'."	No Response.
4	"Mostly anything. When I throw something. Like popsicle sticks, pencils."	"Just about the same things. Like fighting back and hitting."
5	"Cussing, destruction, and for not doing no work."	"Cursing."
6	"For not doing no work."	"Not working. Cussing. Disrupting the class."
7	"Cussing. Refusing to do work."	"Fighting. Refusing to do work, sleeping."
8	"Cursing. And threw a desk across the room."	"Fighting, cussing, pushing on teachers."

Table 7

Reasons Sent to Time Out

	Students (n)	Peers (n)	Teachers (n)	Student Files (n)
Biting/Hitting/ Fighting	2	3	2	9
Throwing Objects	2	–	2	8
Cursing	4	3	2	7
O.A.A.	–	–	1	6
Threatening	–	–	–	6
N.F.D.	–	–	–	4
Disrespectful	1	–	1	4
Destruction	–	–	–	3
Disruptive	–	1	1	3
Refusing Work	3	3	–	3
Sleeping	–	1	1	–
Horseplay	–	1	–	–
Smoking	–	1	–	–

Note: n= number of times mentioned; O.A.A.= Out of the

assigned area; N.F.D.= Not Following Directions

Table 8

Students Answering Question Six Describe Feelings/Behaviors
While in Time Out

Subject	Response

---

1 "Mad. I don't know. Smetimes I kick around on the walls and stuff. Sometimes I don't. Depends on what kind of mood I'm in."

2 "Play. I say 'Ahhhhhh...hhh'."

3 No Response.

4 "Do anything. Like kick stuff, hit stuff. Hit the window. Sometimes I go in there and go to sleep."

5 "I get mad. Beat on the walls, cuss 'em out, things like that."

6 "I just sit there and get out and then, like if they put me in there, and I'm mad, I just walk around the room but other times I go in there and sit down."

7 "Anger. A lot of cussing. I don't hit anybody or anything. I just do a lot of cussing."

8 "I get mad. By trying to break out."

Table 9

Student Behaviors/Feelings While in Time Out

	Students (n)	Teachers (n)	Student Files (n)
Kicking/ Hitting	5	4	7
Sitting/ Laying Down	1	–	6
Cursing	2	2	4
Pacing	1	–	3
Sleeping	1	3	2
Playful	–	1	2
Scream	1	2	2
Crying	–	1	1
Fear	–	1	–
Biting	–	–	1
Working	–	–	1
Stripping	–	1	–
Pulling Hair	–	–	1

Note. n= number of times mentioned

Table 10

Students Answering Question Six a. Describe Their Reaction
When Asked to go to Time Out

Subjects	Response

---

1   "Tell 'em I'm not going. 'Cause I don't like going to
the time out room, 'cause it just nothing to do in
there besides kick around. If not (you don't go),
they'll restrain you and put you in time out."

2   No Response.

3   "They restrain you most of the time."

4   "Mostly the time I don't go. They'll restrain you.
And then they'll tell you like 3..2. till they get
you in there. Then they'll put you in the time out
room and then shut the door until you calm down."

5   "I go to time out. First I cuss 'em then I go to time
out. (If you refuse) They call one of the men staff.
Then they escort them to the time out room."

6   "Sometimes I tell them I won't go, but I go anyway."

7   "I just go to time out. I have (refused) but I don't
anymore. I don't mess with it. I just go."

8   "Try to keep them from pulling me in there. They try
to grab you and push you in there."

Table 11

Students Answering Question Six b. Describe Voluntary Time

Outs and If They Have Volunteered

Subject	Response

1	"No. I don't know (how). Some (students) just say I want to take a time out and go to time out."
2	No Response.
3	No Response.
4	"(Nod) When I'm doing something wrong. You just walk off and walk in there. Say you need a time out and then go ahead."
5	"I don't know (how to volunteer)."
6	"Yeah. I just go in there and tell the teacher I'm going to time out."
7	"Yeah. I just tell the staff I need a time out. And if it's legit, you go. If they know you just wanna go to sleep, they won't let you go."
8	"Nope (have not volunteered). Get up and walk to time out."

Table 12

Students Answering Question Seven Describe How They Feel

After the Time Out

Subject	Response

---

1   "Fine. I have to sit down and be quiet. Then they come in and talk to you and tell you to go back to class."

2   (Do you feel O.K.?) "MHMMMM."

3   No Response.

4   "Allright."

5   "I feel all right. I still be mad, but I be all right."

6   "Oh...Happy."

7   "It depends on the situation. If I was angry when I went to the time out I'm usually angry when I come out of the time out. So, it don't really make much sense."

8   "Ready to stay in there. To get out of my work."

Table 13

Students Answering Question Seven a. and Seven b.

Subject	In Control?	Was Time Out Necessary?
1	"Yeah."	"Sometimes, I do, sometimes I don't. For stupid things. Disrespectin' teachers, ain't much wrong with that. Least I not botherin' anybody else. He gonna mess with me, I be disrespectful."
2	No Response.	No Response.
3	No Response.	No Repsonse.
4	"MHMMMM."	"It depends on what you do. If you throw something, that ain't necessary. Like if they fight back."
5	"Yeah."	"Yeah. 'Cause I was actin' up and doing all that stuff."
6	"MHMMMM."	"Yeah. It depends. Like if I did it you know, I think it was necessary, if I didn't do it, I wouldn't."
7	"Yeah, but I still angry."	"Not really, 'cause I the same way I was when I went in there."
8	"Nope."	"No."

Table 14

Students Answering Question Eight Explain Why/Why Not the
Time Out Procedure is Fair

Subject	Response

---

1   (Nod yes). "'Cause sometimes students need time out.
     So, they can relax and get out the stress."

2   No Response.

3   No Response.

4   "Yeah. 'Cause it's something to help you and the staff
     and the other people around here. 'Cause you could
     hurt somebody."

5   "Yes. 'Cause I think it's fair."

6   "To some people it is and to some people it ain't. Say
     if I don't get along with this teacher they make you
     have to sit in there till you talk to that teacher.
     What I think is that they're forcing you to talk to a
     person they don't want to talk to."

7   "For some people I guess it is and for some people
     it's not. I mean if you want to go to time out and you
     don't want the time out to work, it's not going to
     work. If you want it to work, it'll work."

8   "No 'cause they ain't got no right lockin' you in a
     box."

Table 15

Students Answering Question Nine Suggest Alternatives to

Time Out

Subject	Response

---

1   "I don't know. Send 'em to the office or something. Do like a regular school does. If they gonna be disrespectful to a teacher they'll write you up."

2   No Response.

3   No Response.

4   "Suspend 'em I would guess."

5   No Response.

6   "Only thing they got to do is suspend 'em. That's the only other thing they got 'cause if it weren't no time out, they'd just do the same thing."

7   "Just like a public school. Suspend them out of school suspension or whatever."

8   "Restrain them. Kick them out."

Table 16

Staff Subjects Describe Time Out

Subjects	Response

1   "There are three kinds of levels of time out around
here. We have time out in the safe room which is
where we have our time out rooms. We typically
put someone in the room who is kicking,
hitting, biting, or if they are so loud they're at
the point of pacing and we put them in time out.
And sometimes that's a judgement call. We use the
chair in the back of the room for cursing."

2   "If they are being very disruptive and they're
keeping other students from doing their work then
they'll get sent to time out. And like with the
younger ones, we time them out for probably a little
bit more frequent things. Like if they don't respect
personal space." Now, usually with the older ones,
the only time I time out is when they're being
disruptive or bothering another student that's
trying to do their work."

3   "We decided that the perimeters outside the time
out booth is the safe space. Say they've been
cursing. They can sit out there for five to ten
minutes. If we feel like they're going to be

(Table 16 continues)

violent or upset or anything, we'll put them in
time out and we'll shut the door. Sometimes, we
keep it open if they're not too upset or angry."

4   "I guess the process of time out, for me is, I
issue a time out area and I will let the student
remain there until I feel he's ready and I'm ready
for him to come back to the classroom. It might be a
matter of ten minutes, fifteen, to thirty minutes."

Table 17

Staff Answering Question Two State the Purpose of Time Out

Subject	Results
1	"I feel the purpose of it is to give students time to refocus their energy so, that they can be effective in the classroom. Our goal here is to have students who are effective and productive, who can stay in the classroom and learn."
2	"I think so they can think about their actions and to also see that there are consequences for their actions. Because if they're going to be disruptive, then that's their choice to go to time out to cool down and think about what they're doing and come back when they're ready to work."
3	"To deescalate. To calm down. To realize what they've done. To come back to class and pick up where they've left off in their work and our main concern here is to make sure they get they're work done."
4	"Safe place for the students. Just a safe place."

Table 18

Staff Answering Question Three State Who Benefits From Time

Out

Subject   Response

---

1   "The students. I think everybody does. We're giving

       them a chance to come back in and be productive in

       the classroom. I think staff benefits when a student

       acts out. We can take control and say that person is

       in that room and I can hold the door if I need to. It

       also benefits students in the class. A student who is

       so agitated, it tends to draw the others."

2   "I'd say everybody involved. I would benefit because

       I can then teach the others better and would have

       more opportunities to help them. The other students

       that are trying to work, can work better because

       they're not going to have that student running around

       and doing whatever."

3   "The staff and the students benefit from it because

       it relieves the teacher from the stress of a power

       struggle, where the counselor can take him to time

       out where he can calm down. Then he can realize what

       he's done, gives him some open space. It eliminates

       the disturbance in the classroom."

(<u>Table 18 continues</u>)

4 "Both the students and the teacher. Well, the teacher can use the classroom. It's not as disruptive there with a student that is aggressive or violent. When you eliminate that student, the other students that were in there can do their work. When you take the student that was aggressive and violent out of the environment that he feels threatened in and put him in the place which we call the safe place, the student can deescalate a whole lot quicker by himself."

Table 19

Staff Answering Question Four Describe the Procedure of Time

Out

Subject   Response

---

1   "If a child has cursed, and the older ones are really

     bad about that, we'll put them in the back of the

     room and let them sit there. It's a choice. Do you

     want to sit here or go to time out? I try to keep the

     same standards when I put them in time out. You curse

     at me or are disrepectful or pacing around here you

     are not calming down. Then you're going to go to the

     time out room, or the safe area, but out of the

     classroom."

2   "We try to go from least restrictive to the more

     restrictive, and we always give them choices. If they

     do the right thing, they don't have a time out. Now,

     they'd first be in the room, usually, and if they

     can't handle it. If they're sitting there banging

     together stuff then now we're going to go out of the

     room. So, we go from there to outside the time out

     room, to the time out room with the door open if

     they're calm. If they are not calm, they get it

     closed."

3   "Sometimes it's time out in the room. Sometimes

(Table 19 continues).

they they sit out in the safe space for a few minutes and then go back to class. And if they're disturbing the class, you then have to escort them out of the class to time out."

4   "I normally first try to verbally deescalate the student. If that doesn't work, then I ask him or her to take a time out in the classroom. If he refuses that and becomes more aggressive or violent, I'll issue him a time out in the safe place."

Table 20

Staff Answering Question Four a. Decribe Modifications for
the Time Out Procedure

Subjects	Response

---

1   "I tend to do more time outs in the classroom with
     the younger guys, before I send them out because I'm
     used to working with them. That's the main alteration
     I make. The little guys, I normally wait until they
     are kicking, biting, screaming, or big deal things.
     Putting the older guys in the back of the room if
     anything, it's almost   embarrassing. What I do for
     the little ones, they don't want that done for them."

2   "With the different age levels. With the younger
     ones, we time them out for things that we would over
     look with the older ones. We're just a little bit
     more sterner on the younger ones because I feel like
     their actions aren't set and we still have a little
     more of say there."

3   "Every student has a different personality. We modify
     and change this for every student. It just depends on
     all of the different personalities."

4   "All students. Because I think it's fair. On their
     terms. So, I use it consistently."

Table 21

Staff Answering Question Five Describe Behaviors That Result
in Time Out

Subject   Response

---

1   "Any kind of aggressive behaviors. Any kind of

         behavior aimed at hurting someone, any behavior that

         is so disruptive to the classroom that it is

         impossible to have a normal education process. Any

         disruptive behavior that is preventing students from

         learning. We've had studnet knock over computers,

         knock over desks, clean desks. Sometimes, like we

         sent a child out this morning. He was sleeping in the

         classroom."

2   "It depends on how angry they are. Very aggressive or

         when they're very angry. Very, very aggressive

         behaviors, kicking, hitting, everything."

3   "Cursing is pretty much number one. Throwing things

         in the classroom. Moving desks. Disturbing their

         peers. Not letting them do their work. Walking out of

         the classroom without permission."

4   "Disrespect or disrupting the classroom. Cursing.

         A lot of cursing. We don't mind it if they curse a

         little, but it's the excessive amounts of cursing."

Table 22

Staff Answering Question Six Describe Student

Behaviors/Feelings in the Time Out Room

Subject   Response

---

1   "You see a lot of kicking, screaming, cursing at you.
        Cursing at whoever comes in there. A lot of attention
        getting things, especially with the little guys. We
        have one that strips. Some sadness that leads to
        anger. Anger and frustration are the big ones I see
        in time out."

2   "I have observed that they have been very angry or
        else they get very sleepy and they might go to lay on
        the floor or just go to sleep for a while. I've seen
        when they get playful."

3   "When in time out, the behaviors are usually kicking,
        screaming, cussing. There's a lot of things they do
        in time out but most of the times it's yelling,
        screaming, and cursing because they want to be out."

4   "It depends on the student. Some students sleep,
        some other students knock the window out, some kick
        the door down. Fear. A lot of fear. Some will cry. We
        have a couple hit their heads on the wall, urinate on
        the floor, feces behind the door."

Table 23

Staff Answering Question Six a. Describe the Procedure of
Time Out if Students Do Not Go Willingly

Subject   Response

---

1   "We tell them up front that if you can't come out
     on your own we will escort you to process and they
     don't like it. It's not a fun thing to do, to escort
     a student out of the class. It's not done terribly
     frequently."

2   "When they get to a point where they're being
     destructive, where they can hurt somebody, then we'll
     use the Mandt technique and it's just special holds
     that we use to restrain the students that don't hurt
     the students."

3   "I'll go over and talk with them. Then I give them
     a time limit, when I've tried everything else. I'll
     say hey we need to calm down. I'm giving you five
     minutes to calm down and if not, I'm going to have to
     escort you to the time out room. If I think he's
     going to be violent or upset, I'll get some
     assistance and one will be the leader and the other
     one will assist and we'll lead him out. I see it as
     the last thing."

4   "We give them two options. They can either go on

(Table 23 continues)

their own and if they become so aggressive that we think they're going to hurt us or themselves, we'll restrain them. And if the aggression continues to grow, and they keep thrashing around, then we'll take them to the floor. Or, we'll let them take themselves to the floor."

Table 24

Staff Answering Question Six b. State How They Permit
Voluntary Time Outs

Subjects	Response

---

1 "We tell them that if they need a time out or need some time, to let us know. We limit the ones going in the time out area. Most of the times we can figure out if it's attention seeking by who else is in there that they want to see."

2 "Yes, we do."

3 "Yes, got to be careful with that you know. They might want to get out of their work. We have some that get really upset and volunteer to go to time out. We only try to let them stay about five to ten minutes, less as possible so as they don't miss much of class."

4 "You have to feel out the student and know his actions or his ways. If they come in sleepy or lay their head down, they want a time out so they can sleep. You just have to know the student."

Table 25

Staff Answering Question Seven Describe How Students Feel
After the Time Out

Subject   Response

---

1   "Their anger and frustration is out, so they tend to
        want to talk to staff and they don't mind talking. We
        normally process with them and we talk about what
        went on. So, I think they feel pretty calm at that
        point. Feel focused."

2   "Usually they're pretty calm and they're ready to
        sit down and get their work done. They're seeing
        reason again. We go through a processing with them.
        They're not as angry."

3   "There is a processing. We have forms, the reasons
        for the time out, the students actions before the
        time out, the students actions while in the time out.
        And we fill these out."

4   "I process with them. I ask how they're feeling and
        if they want to go back to the classroom, finish
        their work, talk, take a walk. I'll open the door and
        ask them to clean up their mess. That way I know
        they're following directions and they're coherent.
        Watching their behaviors, how tight they're holding
        their fists, their jaw."

Table 26

Staff Answering Question Seven a. State if the Students are in Control After the Time Out

---

Subjects	Response

---

1   "Yes. That's one of the signs we look for to let them out."

2   "Yeah. A lot more in control when they come back."

3   "In most cases they are. We try to find out before by giving them school work and if they say they're going to do their work and calm down and they're breathing O.K., we'll let them go."

4   "When I let them go, they are. A lot of (staff) ask for time, but I think that back fires. What I do is tell them, you'll have as much time as you need. If it's an hour to two hours or whatever."

Table 27

Staff Answering Question Seven b. State If the Time Out is a

Necessary Procedure

Subjects   Response

---

1   "Yeah. I think it's a necessary thing. We're pretty

     careful not to send a child to time out

     unnecessarily."

2   "Yes. Most cases, I believe that time out helped

     them very much. And I believe that they themselves

     know that they need a time out so, I feel myself

     that is they ask for a time out."

3   "Yes, I do. 'Cause they want to be loved, like

     everybody else, and that time out is there for them.

     To them it's like a hug or something. I did this

     wrong, so punish me."

4   "If I give them a time out, then it's necessary.

     For me, I take a lot. So, if I give a time out, it

     was deserved."

Table 28

Staff Answering Question Eight State if the Time Out

Procedure is Fair

Subject   Response

---

1   "Yes, I think it is. The kids don't think at the time

     that it's fair, but I try to make sure something

     really happens before sending them to time out, so

     when I get back, I can say this is why I put you

     here."

2   "Yes, I do."

3   "Yes. Very fair. It's very, very, very fair. I

     think it is and I think most of the students, well

     some don't, but most think it's fair, too."

4   "I think it's fair in a school system. And dealing

     with students who need some type of action besides

     suspension. And who needs space or time to

     themselves to deescalate, to think about what they're

     doing, how they are hurting other students, and how

     they're interrupting the class."

Table 29

Staff Answering Question Nine Describe Any Alternatives to the Time Out Procedure

Subject	Response
1	"I quite honestly don't think it could really be done. It has been one of the problems at a regular school. They didn't have that available to them. I'm not sure if anything less than being timed out by themselves would be effective."
2	"I definitely think you'd have to have the counselor take them out and process with them somehow. Not in the room, but just tell them I think we need to be out of the classroom until you're ready to join in with the other students. I think the behavior definitely needs to be dealt with out of the classroom instead of IN the classroom."
3	"Teachers would have total chaos. I mean it would be hard for them to teach anything because they wouldn't have a place to take them or put them in the classroom. Time out is very effective and without it teachers are going to have a hard time. In this kind of field, that we're dealing with."
4	"Give homework, send them to the principal's office. Have homework sent home."

Table 30

Theme One: A Positive and Caring Learning Environment has
been Established

Subject	Response
4	"If there is one in the time out, I'm always looking through the (time out) window."
4	"I want to know how they're feeling."
3	"We try to let them know that we care about them. I think they want to be here. I mean if this school was closed today they'd be upset."
3	We work together well. We process everything."
1	"We are going to take control and keep the environment safe for you guys."
1	"You're always assessing what you did and why you did it."

Table 31

Interrater Reliability

	R+r1	R+r2	r1+r2
Theme 1	75%	75%	75%
Theme 2	75%	71.42%	80%
Theme 3	85.5%	83.3%	71.3%

Note. R= Researcher; r= rater

Table 32

Theme Two: Inconsistencies and/or Contradictions Made Among

Staff Members

Subject	Response
4	"For me, their time would start when they wake up (after sleeping in time out).
1	"I think that what they've gotten away with all through school is sleeping in class."
3	"We try to be consistent. My methods are different, but they are effective."
4	"I don't like it (for students to do work in time out) or prefer it. Only in the safe place."
3	"We'll bring the work in here (time out) to start it then he'll go back (to class).

Table 33

Theme Three: Changes Have Been Made in the Time Out

Procedure Since the Program Began

Subject	Response

4	"I do not give a time limit. When we give the students a set time , like given ten to fifteen minutes. Afterwards, they would come right back. That's why I eliminated time."
3	"It's (time out) very effective now because we're consistent. When I first got here, things were a little different."
3	"We haven't put hands on a student in say a month and a half."
1	"When we first started out, we were doing time out more and more because we had some students who were not suited for our program."